

FRENCH INDO-CHINA

nues. All courts judged both civil and criminal cases. The originally simple and effective procedure, like the moral and equitable basis of Khmer law, had long before the French Protectorate been distorted and undermined by a venality in which the fisc was the first to give the example to private profiteers throughout the whole system. Comptioa, albeit of an amiable kind, characterized the Khmer feudality far more than it did the Annamite mandarinat.

KHMER CULTURE

The most characteristic manifestations of Khmer culture were inspired by religion. The penetration of Brahmanism and its sacred language Sanskrit into Cambodia probably date from the first century of the Christian era, and it maintained its ascendancy until the twelfth* Brahma, the absolute and universal, has incarnated himself as the creator; as Vishnu the preserver, and as Shiva the destroyer—three principles by which he permeates all nature. Worshippers usually select one of the trinity to whom to address their devotions, thereby automatiollf reducing the other two to secondary roles. In Cambodia it is above all the cult of Shiva, though the other two along with a host of minor deities are not without honour. The Brahmaas, who have given to the country numerous kings, were never very scrupulous about caste. They were ususUypriests and sehokrs,tiough sometime artisans, highly avaricious of royal favours and donations. This caste also practised it his survived as the Baku, or one hundred families, certain customs mark as a group apart.

The Inscription in lado-China is in Sanskrit and is of Buddhis-

tic It shows the existence of an Indian colony in South

as well as in Potman, !>y the second century.

Buddhism,
 saw a missionary character, was probably
 imported into the
 merchant From the end of the eighth
 century
 is proof of the powerful expansion of Buddhism
 there,
 of the known as Mahayana, which came
 through
 all semblance to the original doctrines on
 its
 It,]» m coDoepicm of Buddha that
 omitti-
 his into a hierarchy of divinities who are, in
 their turn,
 by their emasculated the IkiddMsatoras, and they too
 are
 by the mythology. Malaya also at this
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